

# The Bolt

The Official Publication of the Ford Amateur Radio League

## President's Note: March, 2009

I joined several fellow FARL club members and other area amateurs and attended the LARC Swap and Shop last month on February 15<sup>th</sup>. This was my first swap of the season, and I enjoyed the chance to get out and see what goodies I needed. I did find a few items to take home with me, including a new ¼ wave mag mount antenna that works very well with my handi talkie radio, and a laptop bag for my ham radio laptop computer. I was very happy to be able to find the exact antenna I needed. Those who attended the February club meeting knew that I was having major antenna problems that impacted my ability to operate on the 2m bands. The new handi talkie antenna fits well into my briefcase, and allows me to operate from test vehicles I occasionally take home from work. I had found my old mini antenna no longer worked over last summer, and my ½ wave full size magnetic mount antenna stopped working after I had problems with my car motorized mount antenna. I ended up having one antenna element fail, and a second antenna element center connection apparently get unsprung. Fortunately, I did not have to go looking for radio repair parts, as both radios appear to have lived through the ordeal. I saw some club members successfully selling items from the club table as well. It was very positive to see all at the swap this week, and that we supported the event with our club table.

I had a very interesting PSK31 contact this past month. I had a 20 minute chat with Argelio from Havana, Cuba. I am used to the Cuban stations being very prominent during contests and also on weekends. For the most part, I have only had very brief contacts with the Cubans, then they move on. This time, he and I had a very nice conversation. We discussed our stations, the effect of the recent hurricanes on the islands of both Cuba and Jamaica, and a wish for a calm summer this year. I was surprised that our Delta flight flew right over Cuba to Jamaica from Atlanta. I could see very well how close the two islands are to one another. I also saw the incredible damage that the summer hurricanes left on the island of Jamaica. There were piles of rubble still everywhere, and a lot of reconstruction going on. We were staying at a very nice resort, and we could see all the new growth on the trees, trees that had been cut in half during the summer hurricanes. I knew that some of the same hurricanes that hit Jamaica had also hit Cuba. When hurricanes hit the US, people move out to inland locations. On these islands, there is no real place to run to. The bus driver who took us to the resort noted that they have strong buildings to go to during hurricanes, and the Cubans have constructed such buildings as well. Argelio had a G5RV antenna up at his location, which is pretty easy to take down before a storm, and capable of restoring it after a storm. We both enjoyed our conversation, and it would be nice to have a thaw in US-Cuban relations.

73,

Dave

N8HKU

## Congratulations to our newest Amateur!

Congratulations to club member Bernie Mitchell for earning his first Amateur radio license on February 20<sup>th</sup>, as KD8KEO. Bernie is the proud recipient of a Technician class license, and he has said that he is studying for his General Class. We look forward to hearing you on the air!

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==> ARRL DX PHONE CONTEST BRINGS DX IN FULL FORCE TO HF BANDS

With the 2009 ARRL International DX CW Contest now history the first full weekend in March brings the next round of competition: The 2009 ARRL DX SSB Contest <<http://www.arrl.org/contests/rules/2009/intldx.html>>. Like its CW predecessor, this event focuses on DX stations working all US states and Canadian provinces, while US and Canadian amateurs try to work as many DX countries as possible over the 48 hour contest period.

"While the origins of the ARRL DX Contest go back to 1929, the first Phone weekend wasn't until 1937," said ARRL Contest Branch Manager Sean Kutzko, KX9X. "AM was the voice mode used at that time. The rules may have changed since the event was held back in the 1930s, but the premise remains the same: How many contacts with stations in far-away locales can you make?"

Just as in the CW contest a couple of weeks ago, US and Canadian stations send a signal report and their state or province, while DX stations send a signal report and their transmit power. Remember that for this contest, Alaska and Hawaii are considered DX stations -- this means stations in KH6 and KL7 focus their efforts on working Stateside and Canada.

How can you participate? Kutzko said you're only limited by your imagination and willingness to get on the air: "Even though we are at the bottom of the 11-year solar cycle, there will be plenty of chances to work DX, even for stations running 100 W and a dipole or vertical antenna. If you live in an area where antenna restrictions exist, take your contest effort on the road! Operate from your car, set up a portable antenna in a park or campground or see if a friend's station is available. If you have a station and won't be using it, consider opening your doors to members of your club to try their hand at working some DX. If you make 100 QSOs, you're eligible to purchase a commemorative pin for your efforts."

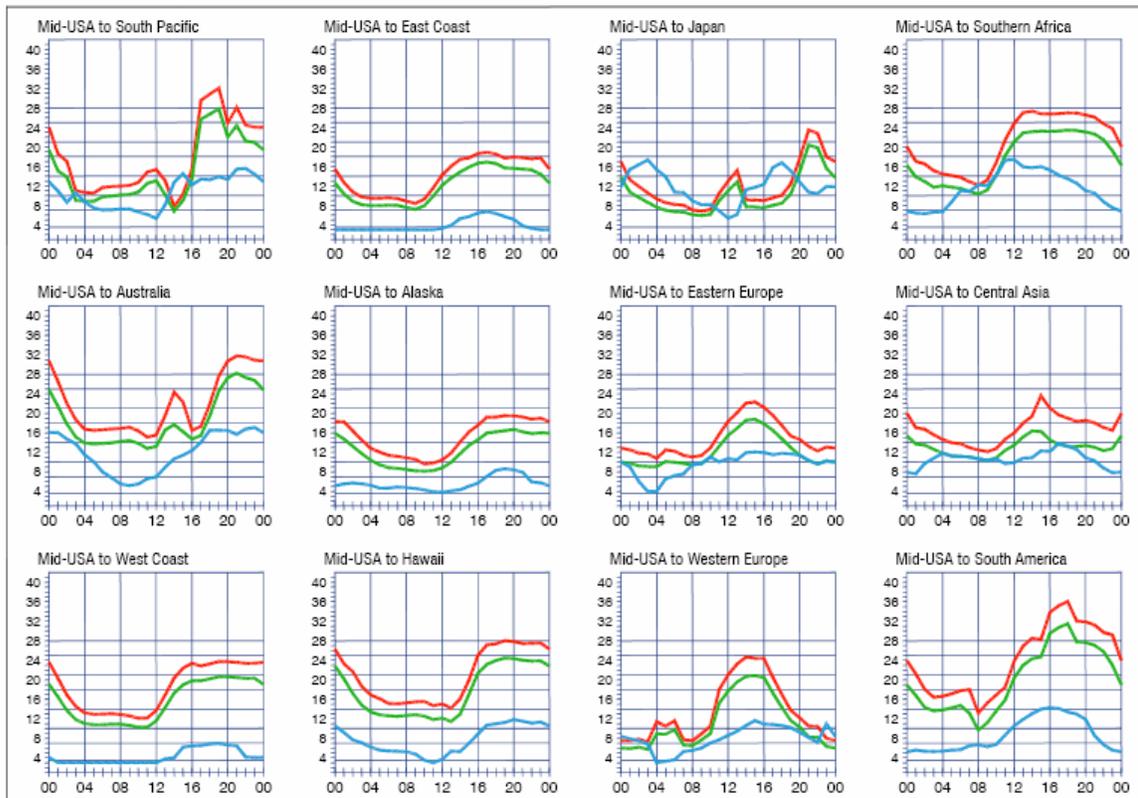
**The ARRL DX Phone Contest runs from 0000 UTC Saturday, March 7 to 2359 UTC Sunday, March 8.** Complete rules and forms are available online <<http://www.arrl.org/contests/forms/>>. Why let all this DX pass you by? Get on the air and have some fun!

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## Propagation Chart for the DX Contest

The chart below shows the maximum usable frequency expected for next month. The times are in UTC. The lowest line represents the lowest usable frequency to reach that area. It is listed for CW, so the frequency may be a bit higher for the upcoming SSB contest. With a chance of a limited number of sunspots, make sure to try out the higher frequencies and see if they are open!



**When are the bands open?** These charts, generated using CAPMan, show probabilities for average HF propagation in the month of **March 2009** for the paths indicated. The horizontal axes show Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), and the vertical axes frequency in MHz. On 10% of the days of this period, the highest frequencies propagated will be at least as high as the upper red curves (HPF, highest possible frequency) and on 50% of the days they will be at least as high as the green curves (MUF, classical maximum usable frequency). The blue curves show the lowest usable frequency (LUF) for a 1500-W CW transmitter. For SSB or a lower transmitter power, the LUF will be somewhat higher than the blue curves indicate. See Oct 1994 QST, pp 27-30, and Feb 1995 QST, pp 34-36, for more details. The predictions assume an observed 2800-MHz solar flux value of 79. This is a **Low level** of solar activity. See the detailed propagation tables on *The ARRL Antenna Book CD-ROM*.

## FARL MEETING MINUTES, FEBRUARY 12, 2009

Minutes recorded by Roger Reini, KD8CSE, Recording Secretary

**CALL TO ORDER:** At 7:03 by president Dave, N8HKU. There were 11 members and 2 guests in attendance. After introductions, one of the guests introduced himself as Bernie Mitchell, prospective club member. He is a Ford retiree who is planning to take the Technician exam this coming Saturday. **UPDATE:** (Bernie passed his Technicians test and has the callsign KD8KEO)

**MINUTES:** Minutes from the January meeting were attached to the minutes. Bob, N8JUH, moved to accept them; Bill, WA8HEA, seconded. Motion carried, the minutes were approved.

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**TREASURER:** Bill, WA8HEA, reported the club balance was sound. Major income last month was from the dividends from DFCU; major expenditures were the phone bill, the post office box, and the table at the Hazel Park swap.

**TICKET SALES:** Bill, N8OZV, reported that club members sold 776 auto show tickets, making the club the high seller for FERA this year (we were high seller of Cedar Point tickets last year, too). \$1 of each ticket will be rebated to the club.

**LARC SWAP:** The Livonia ARC swap will be Sunday, February 15. Bill, WA8HEA, moved that the club obtain a table; Al, W8AMH, seconded; the motion carried.

**CPR TRAINING:** No update, as Pat, WD8JDZ, was not in attendance.

**SKYWARN:** Dave, N8HKU, reported on upcoming Skywarn training sessions: Wayne County: Garden City, February 28 and April 18, 10 AM at Maplewood Community Center; Livonia, March 30, 7 PM at the Livonia Public Library; Trenton, April 3, 7 PM at Westfield Center. Washtenaw County: Ypsilanti, March 14, 10 AM at the Ypsilanti Township Civic Center; Ann Arbor, May 9, 10 AM at Pioneer High School.

**REPEATER:** Dave, N8HKU, still has repeater phone patch instructions. No other updates on repeater operations.

**NEWSLETTER:** Thanks to Al, W8AMH, for editing the February newsletter; Dave, N8HKU, will edit it for March.

**WEBSITE:** The club website is now at <http://www.k8utt.org/>; the old site redirects to the new one.

**CLASSES:** The Bills, N8OZV and WA8HEA, have been discussing organizing classes. They are still planned for lunchtime at Ford. WA8HEA will help N8OZV with weekday classes; Al, W8AMH, offered to help for weekend classes.

**TESTING SESSIONS:** Bill, WA8HEA, noticed the locations for regular test sessions in the area – Wyandotte, Ann Arbor, Hazel Park, South Lyon, Mount Clemens – and sees an opportunity for regular sessions in western Wayne County. There are at least 5 VE's accredited with ARRL/VE for giving exams, so it would be feasible. He will develop a proposed session schedule and location for the next meeting.

**GUEST:** The second guest this evening was Rajiv, who works at FMCC. He also is studying for his Technician license.

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION:** The club voted on the application of Bernie Mitchell to join. Roger, KD8CSE, moved to accept it; Bob, N8JUH, seconded. The vote was favorable, so Bernie is now a member.

**CALENDAR:** Dave, N8HKU, reviewed the club calendar for the balance of the year. The March topic, digital voice on HF, was deferred due to not having anyone to present on that. The April presentations on maritime and bicycle mobile operations will be moved to March, and Al, W8AMH, will prepare a presentation on Echolink for April. Speaking of Echolink, Bill, WA8HEA, mentioned that our repeater is nearly ready to be configured for Echolink operation. Adjustments to the settings by Murray will be necessary, as will bringing an Internet connection to the site.

**LOOP ANTENNA FOR MEDIUM WAVE BROADCAST RECEPTION:** Bill, N8OZV, showed everyone a loop antenna for medium wave broadcast band reception that he is building for his parents in West Branch, who wish to listen to WJR and CKLW up there. Reception is difficult with standard antennas because of ground-wave and sky-wave interference, so Bill decided to build a modified version of the Four Foot Loop Antenna he found on the web. His modifications include making the supports out of plasticboard rather than wood. There was a suggestion to put something on the horizontal brace to

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discourage birds from roosting and doing other things there. With some adjustment, the antenna might do very well for 160m reception. The antenna is not yet complete; once it is, Bill will report on how well it works and how good the 160m reception is.

J-POLES FOR 2M and 440 MHz: Bill, WA8HEA, showed off several versions of the J-pole antenna for 2m and 440 MHz. The first version was made of aluminum; the second was made of copper and used a tuning stub atop the antenna to tune it for 440 MHz; the third and fourth were antennas made from twin lead cable. One was designed to be inserted into PVC pipe, while the other was able to be rolled up and mounted very easily. Any of these would make a good club project, he said. The L'Anse Creuse club is planning to have a J-pole construction project at their March meeting; sign up by February 25. We could do something similar to make money for the club; there was most interest in the aluminum version.

ADJOURNMENT: at 8:35 PM.

## Club Repeater Information

The Ford Amateur Radio League operates 3 club repeaters under the club K8UTT license. All the repeaters are located in the Dearborn, MI area near the Southfield Fwy. All repeaters are open for members and guests to operate.

Repeater	Output Freq	Input Freq	Tone
2 Mtr Repeater	145.270	-600 KHz	100 Hz PL
1 1/4 Mtr Repeater	224.520	-1.6 MHz	100 Hz PL
70 cm Repeater	443.425	+5 MHz	107.2 PL

**Club Net: 8pm on Sunday, 2 and 1 1/4 meter repeaters!**

## FARL Club Meetings

The Ford Amateur Radio Club meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month, except for Christmas and the summer months (July & August). The meetings are held at 7 PM at the Ford Engine Manufacturing & Development Offices (EMDO) building. EMDO (located at 17000 Southfield Rd, Allen Park, MI) is south of I-94 on the east side of Southfield just north of the Allen Park Municipal offices. Park in the front of the building and come into the main lobby at the side. Knock on the inside door on the right if no one is standing there to let you in.

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## Tin Lizzy Club Calendar – 2009

March: 12<sup>th</sup> Bicycle Mobile (KD8CSE) and Marine Mobile N8OZV  
14<sup>th</sup> Marshall Swap: <http://www.w8df.com/>  
15<sup>th</sup>: Toledo Amateur Radio Club swap:  
<http://www.tmrahamradio.org/hamfest.htm>

April 9<sup>th</sup>: EchoLink, Al, W8AMH

May 18<sup>th</sup>: Milford Amateur Radio Swap:  
14<sup>th</sup>: Emergency Communications  
15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>: Dayton Hamvention  
June 11<sup>th</sup>: Club meeting: Preparation for Field Day  
27-28<sup>th</sup>: Field Day

September 10<sup>th</sup>: Micro controllers, N8OZV

October 19<sup>th</sup>: Celebration of Cycling  
8<sup>th</sup>: Digital Communications: Kenwood Sky command: WA8HEA.

### Skywarn Training:

Here is a list of Skywarn training going on. Roger, KD8CSE, notes that the training this year has some updates from last year's storms. It is always good to see a refresher. For more info:  
<http://www.wa8eoc.org/skyclass.html>

1. Livonia: Livonia Public Library: 7pm, March 30<sup>th</sup>
2. Garden City is April 18
3. Trenton is April 3<sup>rd</sup>.
4. Ypsilanti: Ypsilanti Township Civic Center, Sat Mar 14<sup>th</sup>, 10am
5. Ann Arbor: Pioneer High School, May 9<sup>th</sup>, 10am.

### Club Roster

**Here is the current club roster. If you do not see your name on this list, please contact Bill WA8HEA to find out if you owe dues!**

First name	Last name	Call
Elmer	Block	WB8PRA
Carol	Boyke	N8OZW
Katherine	Boyke	KD8GDK
William	Boyke	KC8GMF
William	Boyke	N8OZV
William	Brezina	WA8HEA
Cecil	Crider	WE8D
Rod	Deyo	K8SGL
Robert	Eizen	K8RGI
Al	Habbal	W8AMH

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Nadine	Habbal	KD8GDJ
Dick	Harris	KW8B
Richard	Hines	N8IQP
Harold	Hinsch	KB8KHS
Ralph	Irish	W8ROI
Joe	Loiselle	N8CTC
Ivan	Love	N8AMT
Joseph	Meyer	KA8KBO
Bernas	Mitchell	KD8EO
Thomas	Musolf	N8NJY
Shunsuke	Okubo	KD8BWD
William.	Piper	N8PRC
Pat	Quinn	WD8JDZ
Roger	Reini	KD8CSE
Chuck	Reti	WV8A
Robert	Richards	N8JUH
Art	Ryan	K8AOJ
Mike	Sansalone	K8ZLG
Murray	Scott	KE8UM
John	Stucka	N3JM
David	Treharne	N8HKU
Bill	Valade	WD8IWQ
Russ	VanZanten	WB8CHE
Debbe	Yeager	KD8I WV
Ron	Yon	WD8ORV

## [A Couple of Good Reasons to Cultivate a Good Relationship With Local Police](#)

A couple of news items have been brought to my attention that deal with the relationship between amateur radio and the police. Gets me to thinking about what, if anything, I could do to improve the relationship between the Ann Arbor ham community and our local police forces.

- [Police Detonate Ham Radio Equipment Mistaken for Bomb](#), - KPTM-TV, Omaha,NE,USA ... a midtown neighborhood briefly Thursday morning for what was originally thought to be a bomb, but in the end, it turned out to be ham radio equipment...

*Maybe this should have been titled, "How to Make a Bang With Ham Radio".....Dan*

- [Indianapolis Police Busted for Bootlegging on 2m](#) - TheIndyChannel.Com  
Not only were the police using the amateur radio transceivers illegally, the radios were installed by police technicians AND they were using profane language on the air. Amazing.

**Courtesy of Dan, KB6NU**

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## 2008-2009 Club Officers

Please contact any of the officers for information regarding the Ford Amateur Radio League, or go to the club website at [www.k8utt.org](http://www.k8utt.org) for current events and activities.

<b>President</b>	Dave Treharne	N8HKU	734-476-1666
<b>Vice President</b>	Pat Quinn	WD8JDZ	734-729-1993
<b>Treasurer</b>	Bill Brezina	WA8HEA	313-563-2905
<b>Secretary</b>	Roger Reini	KD8CSE	734-728-1509
<b>Repeater Chair</b>	Murray Scott	KE8UM	248-743-1704
<b>K8UTT Trustee</b>	Dave Treharne	N8HKU	734-476-1666
<b>Activity Chair</b>	Bill Boyke	N8OZV	313-805-8877

**Next Club Meeting: Thursday, March 12th @ 7:00PM**  
**Presentations: Bicycle Mobile (KD8CSE) and Marine Mobile N8OZV**

The Ford Amateur Radio League  
PO Box 2711  
Dearborn, MI 48123